

U.S. Owns Nixon File,

GSA Says

Post-1974
Associated Press

The General Services Administration said today the pre-presidential papers President Nixon donated to the National Archives are government property and cannot be reclaimed by the President.

A spokesman for GSA, parent agency of the National Archives, said his agency considered the gift legally binding, even though a tax deduction Mr. Nixon took for the gift has been disallowed by the Internal Revenue Service.

More than half of the papers in question consist of Mr. Nixon's general correspondence as Vice President, although the most important items were removed before the gift was made.

The remainder consist of documents collected between 1948 and 1962, including some newspaper clippings.

The tax issue revolved around the question of whether Mr. Nixon made the gift before Congress abolished allowing deduction for such donations. Thus, the spokesman said, the GSA considers the tax ruling irrelevant to the question of whether the papers now belong to the government.

At the White House, deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said it had always been Mr. Nixon's contention that a valid gift had been made, indicating he would make no effort to reclaim the papers.

Asked about efforts by private groups to help the President meet his bill for back taxes by purchasing some of his papers, Warren said he knew nothing about them. Another White House official said Mr. Nixon has not yet addressed the question of how he will raise the money for overdue taxes from 1969-72.

The GSA spokesman said, however, that Mr. Nixon probably would be free to sell or otherwise dispose of other Nixon papers and memorabilia being stored at the National Archives but not included in the deeds donating some of his papers to the government.

The spokesman said Mr. Nixon would be free to reclaim those papers barring any other legal impediment.